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AN EARNEST

INVITATION

TO THE

HOUSE of GOD,

OR

The true Christian's Love to GOD's Publick Worship:

Being the SUBSTANCE of

Two SERMONS

PREACH'D

FEBRUARY 8th, $17\frac{29}{30}$.

By *W. BUSH*, V. D. M.

Published at the Request of the Hearers.

LONDON:

Printed for E. MATTHEWS, at the *Bible* in *Pater-noster Row*; and sold by him and H. WHITRIDGE, at the West-End of the *Royal-Exchange* in *Cornhill*, 1730.

(Price Sixpence.)

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PSALM xxvi. 8.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

THE great decay of the life and power of Religion, among all ſorts of Proteſtants, is too viſible to be denied; and among other things of this nature, the great neglect of the publick worſhip of God is one: In the preſent day that Scripture is verified, *Lamentations* i. 4. *The ways of Zion do mourn, becauſe none come to the*

the ſolemn feaſts, all her gates are deſolate, her prieſts ſigh, her virgins are afflicted, and ſhe is in bitterneſs. You can't but obſerve, that for ſome years paſt our churches, and places of publick worſhip, are frequented but by very ſmall numbers, to the great grief and trouble of all ſerious Chriſtians; nay on our Sabbaths, as well as on other days, how few attend God's publick worſhip! So that 'tis high time for all the miniſters of Chriſt to apply themſelves to the cure of this great evil, and in all faithfulneſs to ſhew the people their tranſgreſſion; I ſhall therefore, with divine aſſiſtance, endeavour, with the reſt of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, to remedy this prevailing ſin, and with this view throw this my poor mite into the common treaſury; and may the great Maſter of Aſſemblies follow it with his bleſſing.

The Penman of this excellent Pſalm was holy *David*, as you may ſee by the title; the occaſion of his penning of it,

as

as is generally thought from the current of the Pſalm, was king *Saul*'s alienating his affection and deportment from *David*, upon the falſe calumnies and aſperſions, which *Saul*'s courtiers, in enmity againſt *David*, had ſuggeſted; whereupon *David* at laſt left the court, and now makes his appeal to God, as Judge of his integrity and innocency.

In the text he teſtifies his ſingular affection, and holy zeal to the houſe and worſhip of God, *Lord I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honour dwelleth*, q. d. bleſſed God, I have a ſincere affection to thy houſe, and to that place where thou art pleaſed to grant thy gracious preſence with thy people; for here I enjoy thy ordinances, and in theſe thyſelf; here my ſoul is delighted and profited, here I have communion with thy people, and communion with thee, O my good and gracious God! for here thine honour dwells.

I ſhall ſum up the words in this propoſition, That truly gracious perſons have a very great love to the publick worſhip of God, and take abundance of delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein.

The things I ſhall do, in ſpeaking to this truth, ſhall be,

I. To prove that truly gracious perſons have a very great love to the publick worſhip of God, and do really take abundance of delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein.

II. Enquire into the reaſons why they do ſo. And

III. Make a ſuitable application and improvement.

I. I am to prove that truly gracious perſons have a very great love to the publick worſhip of God, and take abundance of delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein.

This

This is first very evident in holy *David*, who was a truly gracious person, a man after God's own heart, and he certainly speaks his heart in the words of our Text, *I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwells*; in the xxvii^th^. *Psalm*, ver. 4. he declares the same thing, tho' in other words, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.* This holy Soul is so in love with religion, and the publick worship of God, that he is for fixing and settling in the house of God for his whole life; he was so far from being weary of two or three hours service in the house of God, as many are now, that he was for dwelling there always. Now secondly, as it was with him, so it is with all that are truly gracious; they all love the habitation of God's house, and the place where his honour dwells; whatever o-

thers do, thoſe that are renewed by Grace *will not forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together, as the manner of ſome is*; but they will maintain their Chriſtian communion, both publickly and privately; they will encourage one another in the ways and worſhip of God, and do this ſo much the more, as they ſee the day of Chriſt approaching, when he comes to judge the whole world of mankind, *Heb.* x. 25. Thus much may ſuffice for the firſt thing, *viz.* The proof of the propoſition laid down, that truly gracious perſons have a very great love to the publick worſhip of God, and take abundance of delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein.

II. I am now to enquire into the reaſons why they do ſo, which are theſe that follow:

1. Becauſe God himſelf is graciouſly preſent with them there. In the publick worſhip of God, whilſt his people are engaged in his own appointed ordinances, he

he himſelf is with them. *Matth.* xviii. 20. ſays our dear Lord *Jeſus*, *Where two or three are gathered together, in my name, there am I in the midſt of them*; q. d. In whatſoever place my people are aſſembled, to worſhip God, whether in greater or leſſer numbers, I will, by my Spirit, be with them, to aſſiſt them in every duty, to bleſs my ordinances to them, for the benefit and comfort of their ſouls, to manifeſt my ſpecial love to them, to grant them my favour which is life, and my loving-kindneſs which is better than life, to cauſe them to ſit under my ſhadow with great delight, to experience that my fruit is ſweet to their taſte, and that my banner over them is love. No wonder then that they love the publick worſhip of God, no wonder they are ſo exceedingly delighted therein, when Chriſt, *who is over all, God bleſſed for ever*, is there graciouſly preſent with them.

2. Becauſe this is the way and means to bring them into a more intimate ac-

quaintance with God; it is ſo among men; the more frequently we converſe with them, and enjoy their company, the more intimate, free, and familiar we grow with them; ſo in this caſe, the more frequently we attend the courts of the Lord, the more intimate we ſhall be with Him; many have found it ſo by experience, and I hope ſome in this aſſembly; this was the felicity of that great Believer *Abraham*, *Gen.* xviii. 17. *And the Lord ſaid, ſhall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?* q. d. Shall I conceal what I deſign to do, from my old and intimate acquaintance *Abraham*; he that ſo often viſits me, and with whom I ſo freely and familiarly converſe? This honour have all the Saints, that make uſe of all opportunities to wait upon God in his houſe; at ordinances they grow into a great intimacy with him, and certainly this is a very ſufficient reaſon for ſo doing; for who can tell the felicity of having an intimate fellowſhip with God? 'tis certainly a heaven upon earth.

3. Becauſe this is the right way to make them fruitful in grace, *Pſalm* xxxvi. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the river of thy pleaſures*, i. e. They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with that delightful proviſion thou haſt made for them there in thine ordinances, but much more abundantly ſatisfied in heaven; in thy houſe here they ſhall have abundant pleaſure, delight, and ſatisfaction, but in heaven abundantly more, beyond expreſſion or conception; here their graces ſhall be made to grow and thrive, here their ſouls ſhall be delighted, here they ſhall go from ſtrength to ſtrength, from a leſſer to a greater degree of grace, 'till they come to glory; I hope there are ſome here, that know this to be true from their own experience. To the ſame purpoſe is that in *Pſalm* xcii. 13, 14. *Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God; they ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit*

in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing; they ſhall from time to time grow and increaſe in grace and holineſs; nay old age, and the decays of nature, ſhall not hinder their ſpiritual growth; but under the decays of the outward man, their inward man ſhall be renewed day by day: Well may the Saints therefore *love the habitation of God's houſe, and the place where his honour dwells.*

4. Becauſe of the agreeable and delightful company they there enjoy; here they enjoy the company of the Saints, the excellent of the earth, the beſt part of mankind, whoſe converſation is pleaſant and profitable; and here they enjoy the company of their dear Lord, even the bleſſed *Jeſus*, whom their ſouls love; *Cant.* i. 7, 8. ſays the Church, *Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon, for why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions*, q. d. Diſcover to me, by thy Word and Spirit, which is thy true Church,

Church, and which are thoſe Aſſemblies where thou art preſent, and to whom thou affordeſt comfort and refreſhing, under ſcorching perſecution and trials; for why ſhould I be really one that aſſociates with the diſciples and followers of falſe teachers, who tho' they pretend reſpect to thee, yet ſet up themſelves. Chriſt anſwers, ver. 8. *If thou know not, O thou faireſt among women, go thy way forth by the footſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſide the ſhepherds tents*; q. d. O ye my people, who are the moſt excellent of all mankind, by reaſon of the participation of the divine nature, and God's gracious acceptation, go, and enquire after, obſerve and follow the example and practice of the Saints in former and preſent ages, and bring weak believers to the publick ordinances, diſpenſed by my faithful Paſtors; *vid. Clark in loc.* By all this you ſee what company gracious perſons enjoy in the houſe of the Lord, the Saints and Chriſt himſelf; this muſt certainly highten their

affections

affections to God's publick worſhip, and make them more and more in love with publick ordinances, and encreaſe their hatred alſo to the helliſh tumults of the ungodly.

5. Becauſe of a real ſenſe they have of the need they ſtand in of publick ordinances. They find by woeful experience, that in the want of theſe their corruptions grow ſtronger, and their graces weaker; and that the neglect of a due and diligent attendance upon the means of Grace, gives the Devil great advantages againſt them; they experience alſo, that in neglecting the publick worſhip of God, they often find great deadneſs, and darkneſs, and great doubts and fears encreaſe upon them, to the great trouble and grief of their ſouls, together with divine withdrawments, and the want of Chriſt's comforting preſence; they muſt therefore of neceſſity love to be preſent at the ſolemn aſſemblies.

6. Becauſe they are the ſubjects and ſervants of God. They have devoted themſelves to him; and therefore where ſhould they be, but in their Lord and Maſter's houſe, and heartily engaged in his work and ſervice? Where ſhould the Courtier be, but with his prince at court? And where ſhould the Chriſtian be, but with his God, his Lord and King, in the place where his honour dwells?

7. Laſtly, becauſe of that entire love and affection they have to the ſouls of men. They have by experience found, that in the houſe of God they themſelves, by the plain and powerful preaching of the word, were converted; this has been the happy means of *opening their eyes, and of turning them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God,* Acts xxvi. 18. Now then what they have experienced may be the happy caſe of others, and therefore are for a conſtant maintaining of God's publick worſhip, that ſo ſinners

may come in, and be under the ſame means, in order to their converſion alſo; and that there they may pray for and with them, and live in hopes to ſee the ſame bleſſed effects wrought upon them, that they have had the comfortable experience of; well knowing, that *the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul, and that the teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple*, Pſalm xix. ver. 7. Thus I have finiſhed the ſecond thing, *viz.* given you the reaſons, why truly gracious perſons have a very great love to the publick worſhip of God, and take abundance of delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein; which finiſhes the doctrinal part.

I proceed now, in the laſt place, to make a ſuitable application of this. And in the

Firſt place, is it ſo, that truly gracious perſons have ſo great a love to the publick worſhip of God, and take ſo great

great a delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein? Then hence I infer, that many have juſt reaſon to queſtion their being in a ſtate of grace, upon this account. This plainly appears, if we conſider what vaſt numbers in the preſent age, turn their backs upon the houſe of God, and neglect his publick worſhip; how many hundreds crowd to the Playhouſe, and ſit there for two or three hours together, with all the pleaſure in the world, that care not to come to the houſe of God; and if they do now and then drop into his ſanctuary, for the ſpace of one ſingle hour, their very countenances ſhew their uneaſineſs, and plainly manifeſt, that they take no delight in being there! How many Sabbaths are, by many, ſlept away, and by others talk'd and walk'd away; how eaſily are great numbers of people, by a little illneſs or diſorder, or by a little rain, or a little more than ordinary heat or cold, kept from the houſe of God; nay how many are

there among us, that have not been at Church for ſome years! Bleſſed God! what a height of wickedneſs are we arriv'd to! And if at any time ſome of theſe vile mortals do come to the houſe of God, they come as if they were going to a priſon, or a peſt-houſe; for they will not enter into God's houſe, until publick worſhip is begun; nay ſome, not 'till a great part of it is over, or almoſt ended. What can be the language of ſuch actions as theſe, but this, We care not how little we have of this religious ſtuff; we will ſtay as little a while as may be; and if there be a Purgatory, we think it is the Church; Lord! what will become of the generality of mankind! verifying what is ſaid, *Mal.* iii. 14. *Ye have ſaid it is in vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hoſts?* Theſe things being matters of fact, may fully ſatisfy us that many have juſt reaſon to queſtion their

being in a ſtate of grace. Permit me then, in

The ſecond place, to preſs and perſuade you to pray earneſtly to Almighty God, for his grace: Cry to him to work it in your hearts, that ſo you may be in love with his houſe and ordinances, and take a real delight and pleaſure in waiting upon him therein: Now that I may prevail with you to do this, let me intreat you to obſerve the following motives.

1. Conſider how dreadful it is to die in a graceleſs ſtate; this is to die in a ſtate of enmity with God, and with a heart entirely ſet againſt his worſhip and ordinances; and what muſt the diſmal conſequence of this be, but eternal deſtruction? *For the wicked muſt be turned into hell, even all that forget God*, Pſalm ix. 17. And can you forget God more, than to neglect his publick worſhip, and ſeldom or never come near him in his houſe: You may die this night, for ought you know; certainly

tainly then it is high time for you to pray earneſtly to God, that he would be pleaſed to make you in love with himſelf, and his pure and holy ways.

2. Conſider what a diſmal account you will have to give, at the awful tribunal of Chriſt: You know *we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*, 2 Cor. v. 10. Now, when this great Judge ſhall ask you, Did you ſincerely and conſtantly attend my publick worſhip and ordinances? and you muſt anſwer in the negative, what will follow upon this, but, Take away theſe rebels, and caſt them into the bottomleſs pit; let them dwell for ever with everlaſting burnings, and devouring flames. Conſider, I beſeech you, how terrible, how dreadful your condition will then be; you may flatter yourſelves as you pleaſe, but this will certainly be your portion, if you live and die contemners

and

and deſpiſers of God, and his inſtituted worſhip.

3. Conſider, if you obtain the grace of God, and ſo faithfully and conſtantly worſhip him in his houſe, you will be truly bleſſed and happy, *Prov.* viii. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors,* q. d. He is the only happy man, that conſtantly attends my publick worſhip and ordinances, with a ſincere and upright heart; he is happy here, and ſhall be happy hereafter for ever: Now one would think this ſhould have a very great influence upon you; ſurely you deſire to be truly and really happy, yea to be for ever ſo; why then this is the only way, To become the true and faithful ſervants, and worſhippers of the Lord your God.

4. Conſider how graciouſly Chriſt himſelf invites you to his houſe, *Mat.* xxii. 4. *Come, for all things are ready*; O ſurprizing grace and love! come, I earneſtly deſire you would come to my feaſt,

feaſt, made for poor ſinners in my houſe, and freely take of my great and gracious proviſions I have there made for you: I have there all things ready, that your ſouls can wiſh for or deſire; I have there pardons for you, peace for you, grace for you, ſtrength, light and comfort for you, yea ſalvation for you; come therefore, and you ſhall be heartily welcome to a Saviour; come and I will ſatisfy your longing ſouls, and fill your hungry ſouls with goodneſs, *Pſalm* cvii. 9. Now how can you withſtand all this? what will overcome you, and prevail with you, if ſuch grace and love as this is will not do it? But then

5. And in the laſt place conſider, that to love the publick worſhip of God, and ſincerely and conſtantly to attend upon him therein, is not only an evidence of the truth of grace in your hearts, but alſo the way to grow and increaſe in grace, till you come to glory. *Pſalm* lxxxiv. 7. and 11. verſes com-

compared, *They go from ſtrength to ſtrength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* ver. 11. *For the Lord God is a ſun and ſhield, the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* Theſe gather freſh ſtrength as they paſs along; ſo far are they from being tired with their journey, that in waiting upon the Lord in his houſe and ordinances, they receive greater ſtrength of grace, they increaſe in grace here, 'till they come to glory hereafter. Surely then who would not, from the conſideration of theſe things, be perſuaded to worſhip the Lord our God, in his houſe, and conſtantly attend all his ordinances.

But ſuch is the enmity of man, by nature, to every thing that is good, that they have puzzled their heads to frame objections againſt their attending upon God in his publick worſhip; and they are ſuch as follow, which I ſhall propoſe and anſwer.

1. Some object to this purpoſe; I did heretofore, for ſome years, attend God's publick worſhip, but I never found myſelf the better for ſo doing, and therefore I left it off. I anſwer,

1. If it be ſo, I am ſure the fault is entirely your own; you waited upon God in his publick worſhip, but give me leave to ask you how, and in what manner? Was it not in a formal careleſs way? You were in the houſe of God, but where were your hearts? they were running out after the world, your minds were roving, your thoughts wandering, you were intent upon the finery and dreſs of ſome in the Aſſembly, and feaſting your eyes upon the beauty of a miſtreſs, and took no notice of what you heard; no wonder then that you were never the better for being in the houſe of God; whereas had you with all imaginable care been intent upon the word preached, and heartily engaged in all the parts

of divine worſhip, you would have been the better; ſo that the fault is entirely your own. But again,

2. I anſwer, the bleſſed God takes his own time, to bleſs his ordinances to the ſouls of men, and it is fit he ſhould do ſo; and altho' you are not benefited and profited as yet, yet you know not how ſoon you may: It may be the next Sabbath may be the happy time, if not this, that God may manifeſt himſelf to your ſouls; nay 'tis certain, if you do with diligence, and delight, and in ſincerity worſhip God, you will certainly be the better for ſo doing; *Gal.* vi. 9. *And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not*; our good God will not let us ſerve him for nothing, but will make good his word to all that ſincerely worſhip him, and continue ſo to do; in his own time they ſhall reap the bleſſed fruits of their labours in his ſervice.

3. I anſwer, if you get no good by attending the publick worſhip of God, I am ſure you get no good by neglecting of it; for to ſpeak with reverence to the Majeſty of the great God, he cannot, neither will he go out of his own way to ſanctify and ſave you; can you imagine, that to neglect his appointed means, will be for the good of your ſouls? We read, *John* v. 5. and ſo on, *of a poor creature, a cripple, that was miraculouſly cured by Chriſt*; but when, and where was this done? Why at the pool; he threw himſelf in our Lord's way, and ſo obtained a cure. And if ever we expect to be cured of our ſpiritual maladies, we muſt put ourſelves in Chriſt's way; and this is in his houſe, where he is continually preſent, in order to heal and cure our wounded and diſeaſed ſouls.

4. I anſwer, to neglect the publick worſhip of God, becauſe we have not preſent

preſent benefit, is to tempt God, which is a very great ſin; for 'tis as much as to ſay, I'll try what God will do in my neglect of his publick worſhip, I'll ſee what will be the end of ſtaying at home, or of walking the fields, or of making unneceſſary viſits: How abominable is this! May you not expect that a holy God, who is righteous in all his ways, ſhould ſay, *let theſe Backſliders in heart be filled with their own ways*; let them receive the juſt puniſhment of their own ſins, ſince they have without any juſt cauſe left me and my ſervice. *Prov.* xiv. 14. and what will the end of this be, but ruin and deſtruction to thoſe that thus *tempt the Lord, and provoke the Holy One of Iſrael to anger?*

5. And laſtly, I anſwer, It may be, that, that Sabbath, or that ſeaſon of grace that you laſt neglected your attendance upon God, in his publick worſhip, might have been the very time and ſeaſon, that the Lord deſigned good to your

your ſouls: The Bleſſed God, for ought you know, came there on purpoſe to work grace in your hearts, but truly you were not there to receive ſo great a bleſſing. Where then does the fault lie? is it not on yourſelves? and ſhould not this convince you of your paſt folly, and induce you to reſolve, for the time to come, to neglect no opportunity of attending upon him in his houſe and ordinances?

2. Some object to this purpoſe; What ſhould we go to church for, or why ſhould we attend upon the publick worſhip of God, when we know as much already as the Blackcoats can tell us?

To this I anſwer, This objection is either falſe or true; if it be falſe, 'tis very great folly, and I muſt take the liberty to ſay, great impudence to make it. I am certain of this, that many have talk'd at this rate, that have been mere novices in Divinity. But,

For

For once we'll ſuppoſe it to be true: I then anſwer; tho' you need no Information, do you need no Reformation? Are you as good as you can be? Are all your ways right in the ſight of God and man? That man muſt have a good front of his own, that will dare to aſſert this: Now then conſider, the preaching of the word of God is not only to teach the ignorant the things they are ſtrangers to, but to excite the moſt knowing to the due practice of what they know already; and I am certain we all want this: ſo that ſtill 'tis your duty to attend the publick worſhip of God; becauſe tho' you may want no Information, you certainly want Reformation.

There is but one objection more of any force, and that is this. We can't ſee it neceſſary to attend the publick worſhip of God, for we pray at home on the Sabbath-day, in our cloſets, and in our families; we alſo read the holy Scriptures,

Scriptures, and alſo read very excellent Sermons, better than perhaps we can hear at church.

To all this I anſwer; You ſay, and 'tis well if it be true, that you pray at home on the Sabbath day, in your cloſets, and in your families, that you read the holy Scriptures, and very excellent Sermons; we'll ſuppoſe all this to be true, yet for all this, you are out of the way of your duty, provided you are able to go to church; becauſe God himſelf has inſtituted a publick worſhip, and expreſsly commanded us to attend thereon, *Pſalm* lxxxvi. 9. *All nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come, and worſhip before thee, O Lord, and ſhall glorify thy name.* Again, *Iſa.* xlv. 20. *Aſſemble yourſelves and come*; to the ſame purpoſe is *Iſa.* xlviii. 14. *All ye aſſemble yourſelves and hear.* Beſides, in the Apoſtles times we find it was one main part of their miniſterial office, to gather Churches, and Chriſtian Aſſemblies,

blies, and to adminiſter the ordinances of the Goſpel among them, which was what Chriſt commanded them to do: So that 'tis plain, the neglect of the publick worſhip of God muſt needs be a very great ſin. Again I anſwer, by way of query, You ſay you pray, and read the Scriptures at home, and excellent Sermons, better perhaps than you can hear at Church: I would ask this queſtion, What reaſon have you to expect, that God ſhould viſit you in your own houſes, when you neglect to viſit him in his? You read better Sermons than you can hear at Church; what then, if you contemn his appointments? Pray why ſhould not God contemn your domeſtick worſhip, eſpecially when it is your incumbent duty to wait upon him there? In ſhort, you have no reaſon to expect, your devotion at home ſhould be acceptable to God, whilſt it ſignifies a neglect, yea a contempt of his publick worſhip; there is room and time enough for your private devotions, with-

out the neglect of God's publick worſhip; beſides, God has promiſed to be preſent in Chriſtian Aſſemblies, and his inſtitutions are never without a bleſſing, when there are ſubjects capable of receiving it. Thus I have endeavoured to remove the main objections out of the way of the truth before us.

I ſhall now very briefly add ſomething, to thoſe that are truly gracious, and yet may have fallen into this ſin, of neglecting a due attendance on the publick worſhip of God; for even theſe may ſometimes be guilty of this evil. Lukewarmneſs in Religion was the ſin of a Church, *Rev.* iii. 15, 16. And it is too apparent, it is the ſin of the Churches of Chriſt in the preſent day. That which I have to ſay to you is by way of advice, don't indulge this evil; for if you do, you'll do abundance of prejudice to yourſelves and others.

1. To

1. To yourſelves; for by this means you'll deprive yourſelves of the ordinary means of your growth in grace and holineſs, as is plain from *Pſalm* xcii. 13. Now how prejudicial is this to you again; you'll lay yourſelves open to the temptation of the Devil, for when he has prevailed upon you to neglect the publick worſhip of God at one time, he'll tempt you to do ſo another time, and ſo on; and this will be greatly to your diſadvantage. But then

2. You'll prejudice others as well as yourſelves; you'll prejudice prophane perſons; for when they ſee you careleſs and indifferent as to the publick worſhip of God, they'll conclude that they may do ſo by authority, ſo that you contribute to the hardening of them in this their ſin. And then again, you do injury to the people of God, as 1. to your miniſters; you do by indulging this evil grieve their very ſouls, to ſee you grow

ſo cold and indifferent to God's publick worſhip.

3. You prejudice weak Chriſtians very much, by indulging this ſin; you ſtumble them to ſee you, that have kept cloſe to the publick worſhip of God for many years, now grow cold and remiſs.

4. You do hurt to ſtrong Chriſtians, to ſee you make ſo light a matter of communion with them in ordinances, to ſee you ſlight both God and them; this wounds their ſouls exceeding deep.

In the laſt place you do, by indulging this ſin, affront the bleſſed God himſelf; for what can affront him more, than to ſee his own people ſlight and neglect his publick worſhip?

To conclude then, let us all reſolve, with the aſſiſtance of divine grace, diligently and conſtantly to attend God's houſe and ordinances; and in order to

do this as we ſhould, let us, when we come to God's houſe, get the world as much as we can out of our minds; let us come with a humble heart, and with a firm purpoſe and reſolution of Soul, that with aſſiſting grace we will never forſake the ſolemn Aſſemblies; *but continue ſtedfaſt, immoveable, and always abounding in the work of our God, foraſmuch as we know our labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.*

FINIS.

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